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PG 46

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—Chicago Sun-Times, August 26, 2011

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JOEY CARRILLO



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*"Elmhurst College does a great job of nurturing and supporting LGBT students. Coming out was hard for me, but I've been blessed to have an accepting community to come out to."*

FELICIA DIAZ



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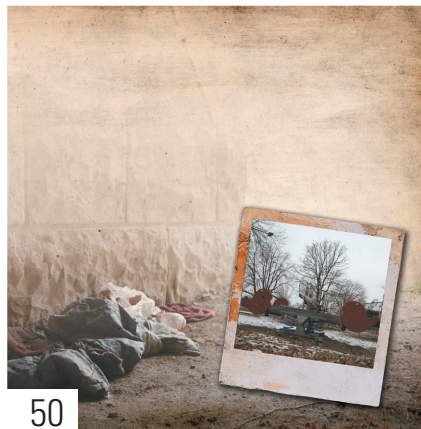
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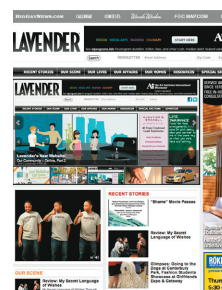
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### ON THE COVER

Rep. John Kriesel, 2011 Person of the Year.  
Photo by Sophia Hantzes



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## Person of the Year.

WE HAVE multiple people within the issue who have done amazing things this past year: Stephan who outlived homelessness in Justin Jones's piece; the politicians and organizations who spoke out against the atrocities in Uganda as detailed by John Townsend; donors and artists and musicians and all sorts of patrons. People do great things. And, people deserve recognition.

This year, we chose John Kriesel, Minnesota Representative of District 57A, as our 2011 Person of the Year. We chose a white man. A heterosexual. A politician. A Republican. A veteran. A person with artificial limbs. A young adult. A suburbanite. A husband. A father. A guy with a great smile.

Without blinking.

It was a fascinating process. As we talked about the issue in the office, the idea was mentioned. Immediately, there was recognition. Of course we know who he is. Of course we know what he did. Of course.

He accepted it humbly. When I called to discuss the issue, I approached as a friendly. My call wasn't expected. It wasn't foreseen. I doubt it could even have been dreamed up as a possibility. Likewise, his allegiance and leadership regarding Marriage Equality was just as much of a surprise to many of us.

But, it wasn't a surprise to him. He knew he was going to stand and speak out for Marriage Equality before he did it. Then, back on that day in May, he did it with conviction and strength. And, as of press time, he's planning to do it at the Minnesotans United for All Families event on December 12 with Governor Mark Dayton, Senator Scott Dibble, and others.

Of course. It's about rights. It's about putting himself in the position of others, some of whom are his 40,000 or so constituents, some of whom are fellow citizens. It's about not going with what is popular, but what is the right thing to do.

And, for *Lavender*, recognizing him as Person of the Year was the right thing to do.

We hope you agree.

With thanks,

Andy



For the video of Rep. Kriesel's speech go to [www.lavendermagazine.com](http://www.lavendermagazine.com). Photo by Sophia Hantzes

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## License to Bully?

Although Michigan toned down its recent hateful anti-bullying bill and passed a saner, more moderate version, the whole episode can still stand as a model of what to expect from bigots; tenacity, disingenuousness, and downright skullduggery.

Into the original anti-bullying bill, Republicans at the last instant inserted a line stating certain exemptions, which essentially gutted the purpose of the legislation:

"This section does not abridge the rights under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States or under Article 1 of the state Constitution of 1963 of a school employee, school volunteers, or a pupil's parent or guardian.

This section does not prohibit a statement of a sincerely held religious belief or moral conviction of a school employee, school volunteer, pupil, or a pupil's parent or guardian."

In other words, had the legislation passed at this point stood, a gay (or, let's face it, Jewish, Muslim, Hindi, Wiccan, atheist or agnostic) child could be hounded daily with, "You're going to Hell, you (fill in the epithet)!" Or, logically, that teachers themselves could be

targets should their lives or religious preferences be suspect.

I may be wrong, but I'm presuming that the religious and moral beliefs of the bully here were presumed to be Christian. I don't think the Republicans intended any other "sincerely held belief or moral [non-Christian] conviction" model to be used against Christian children.

The bill, titled "Matt's Safe School Law" after a bullied 13-year old who had killed himself in 2002, passed 26-11 with every Democrat voting against it—even Matt's father, Kevin Epling, reported being "ashamed" of the bill, adding that the clause, "... is contrary to the rest of the bill and is definitely contrary to what I've been telling students, to step in and step up when they see this taking place in their school."

The upshot was that the Michigan Senate was forced to drop what was being called "a license to bully" and adopted a House version offering a compromise that would require anti-bullying policies in schools.

A happier ending, but still a cautionary tale illustrating that one must continually vigilant to ensure that others' religious and moral codes are not being forced on the general population. □

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## HOLIDAZZLE PARADE FEATURING THE MINNESOTA FREEDOM BAND NOVEMBER 26



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Advent Worship Service • 8:15 am  
Children's Christmas Pageant • 11:00 am

**Wednesday, December 21**  
Soup Supper • 6:00 pm  
Christmas Carols & Communion • 7:00 pm

**Thursday, December 22**  
The Edina Coalition for Grief Support's  
Holiday Service of Remembrance • 4:30 pm

**Saturday, December 24 • Christmas Eve**  
Child-Friendly Service • 4:00 pm  
Candlelight Services • 5:30 & 11:00 pm

**Sunday, December 25 • Christmas Day**  
Worship Service • 10:00 am



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goodwill to all!**

**Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**  
December 18th at 5:00 p.m.  
December 23rd at 7:30 p.m.

**Christmas Eve**  
4:00 p.m. Pageant & Eucharist  
10:30 p.m. Carols with Brass & Organ  
11:00 p.m. Festal Choral Eucharist

**Christmas Day**  
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**Sunday, December 18**

5 PM Blue Christmas Service

**Saturday, December 24**

4 PM Family Christmas Eve; 10:00 PM Music  
with 10:30 PM Christmas Eve Service

**Sunday, December 25**

10:30 AM Christmas Day Communion

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## Christmas Eve at Hennepin Church

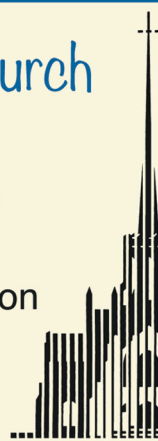
**10:00 AM** - Service of Healing

**2:00 PM** - Journey on the Labyrinth

**4:00 PM** - Family Service/Pageant

**11:00 PM** - Candlelight and Communion

[HennepinChurch.org](http://HennepinChurch.org)



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**Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24**

Family Service and Pageant at 4:00pm

Candlelight Services at 8:00pm & 10:00pm

**Christmas, Sunday, December 25, 10:30am**



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## Advent and Christmas at Mayflower United Church of Christ

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>**

8:30am – Worship Service – Rev. Howard Bell  
9:45am – Advent Reflections – Rev. Susan Thornton  
11:00am – Worship led by Children & Youth  
6:30pm – *Acoustic Christmas*

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>**

6:00pm – Service of Comfort – Rev. Howard Bell

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18<sup>th</sup>**

8:30am and 11:00am Services with  
Mayflower Choir & Instrumentalists  
9:45am – Christmas Caroling led by Marty Haugen

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24<sup>th</sup>**

Christmas Eve Services  
5:00pm – Intergenerational "I Remember" Service  
7:00pm – Contemplative Communion Service  
11:00pm – Lessons and Carols – Mayflower Choir

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25<sup>th</sup>**

11:00am only – Worship Service – Rev. Sarah Campbell

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## ALIVENESS PROJECT CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISER WORLD AIDS DAY DECEMBER 1



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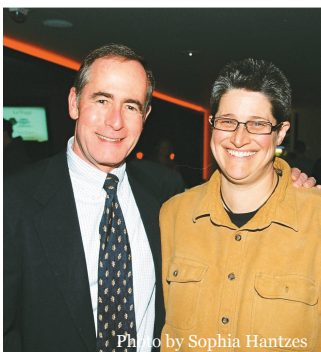


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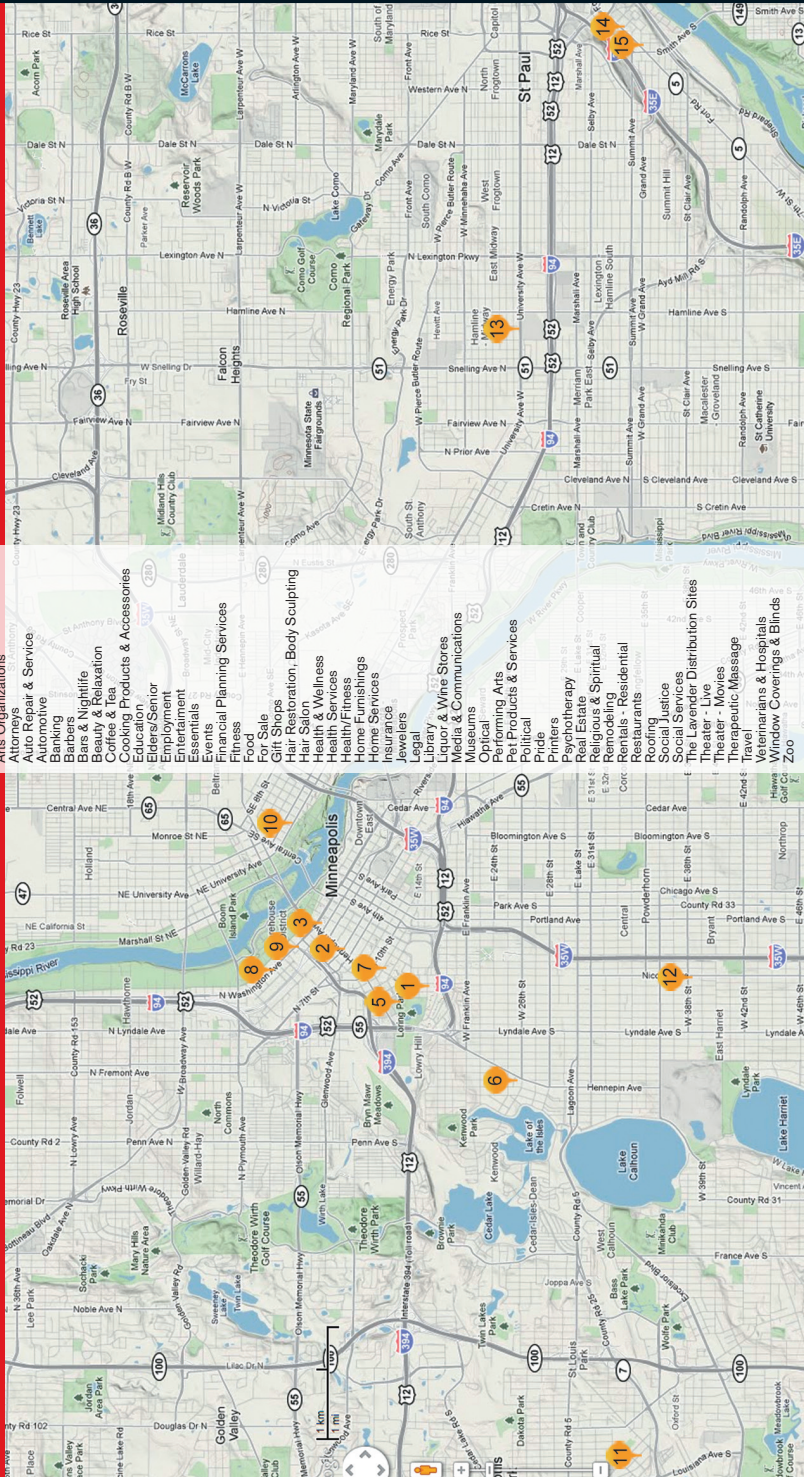


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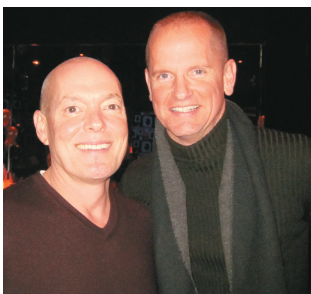
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## MY FAVORITE YEAR

I traditionally focus on one restaurant in my column. However, my editor and I agreed that it might be appropriate for both the season and the times if I were to instead take a look back at the restaurants I've featured this year, and select five that offered something beyond the reach of knife and fork. Food that speaks to the soul, food that can renew the spirit, and food that reminds us all that life is truly beautiful, just as it is.



Photo by Mike Hnida



Photo by Hubert Bonnet



## MASU SUSHI & ROBATA

330 East Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis  
[masusushiandrobata.com](http://masusushiandrobata.com)

**Executive Sushi Chef:** Katsuyuki (Asan) Yamamoto

**Executive Chef:** Alex Chase

**Bar:** Dan Spa

**What to Eat:** Sushi, Japanese Rggplant

**What to Drink:** Any of Dan's Gummi Sours

The hippest sushi spot in the Twin Cities opened this past year in an unlikely spot at 330 East Hennepin. But with some guidance from Tim McKee, Masu Sushi & Robata was an instant success with both diners and critics alike, bringing a taste of vibrant, youthful Tokyo to the traditionally conservative Northeast. The innovative and sustainable sushi at Masu can easily enchant a sushi fanatic, and it can be tempting to stop there. But be sure to also peruse the grill and noodle menus, where fantastic surprises lie in wait for the adventurous eater.

## CAFE LEVAIN

4762 Chicago Ave S, Minneapolis  
[cafelevain.com](http://cafelevain.com)

**Executive Chef:** Adam Vickerman

**What to Eat:** Menu changes too frequently for a specific recommendation

**What to Drink:** Santa Margarita Prosecco

Adam Vickerman finally returned to his former stomping grounds at Levain in March of 2011, to delight crowds with inventive, seasonal bistro fare. Where many chefs prefer sticking to the basics, Vickerman's kitchen delights in playing with ingredients, sometimes changing the menu daily in order to incorporate some new inspiration. The results are accessible to most palates, but quirky enough to tantalize foodies throughout the Twin Cities.



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## OFF THE EATEN PATH



Photo by Hubert Bonnet

### CARIBE

791 Raymond Ave., St. Paul  
[caribemn.com](http://caribemn.com)

**Chef/Co-Owner:** Tony Panelli

**What to Eat:** Rundown with Poached Eggs

**What to Drink:** White Wine Sangria

If standard weekend brunch fare has you faking hangovers, I don't blame you. I feel that "brunch" should be a four-letter word that you shout at bad drivers. However, Caribe's weekend brunch menu manages to be lively and exotic while remaining comfortable. For example, you can still get your benedict, but here you can get conch fritters on a bed of fresh spinach, perfectly poached eggs, and creole-inspired hollandaise sauce. And, you can still have your French toast, but why not have it drizzled with coconut cream? I think you see my point. An infectious cheerful waitstaff makes it impossible not to thoroughly enjoy the experience, "brunch" and all.

### NONNA ROSA'S

4168 W Broadway Ave., Robbinsdale  
[nonnarosawinebar.com](http://nonnarosawinebar.com)

**Chef:** Francesco Suglia

**What to Eat:** Fritto Misto, Maialino Mediterraneo

**What to Drink:** Limoncello Creme

Nonna Rosa's is the brainchild of husband and wife team Francesco and Tina Suglia. Francesco found a passion for cooking after spending his childhood in southern Italy; Tina grew up in the bustling restaurant business here. Their marriage has produced a Robbinsdale hot spot that exudes a quirky charm. The menu doesn't change much, but it doesn't need to—there is an entree to please anyone at the table. And with Francesco at the helm, the kitchen is brilliant, reasonably traditional, and most importantly, reliable. It is easily a place you could feel comfortable bringing your grandmother, yet strangely enough, it is also on my short-list for a no-fuss, yet romantic night out.



## PIZZERIA LOLA

5557 Xerxes Ave. S., Minneapolis  
pizzerialola.com

**Chef/Owner:** Ann Kim

**What to Eat:** Lady Za Za

**What to Drink:** Vajra Barolo

Ann Kim and I have crossed paths from time to time in our "other" lives, as local actors. She is a phenomenal talent, so when she decided to devote herself to creating the perfect pizza, I had no doubt that her kitchen would be a good place to feature. However, even I wasn't prepared for the knock-your-socks-off pies that have since made this restaurant a neighborhood fixture and a pizza-lover's destination. Her crust is perfection, thanks to a gigantic copper, wood-fired oven that could easily have been birthed from the writings of L. Frank Baum. Her toppings range from the traditional tomato, basil and cheese to the radical kimchi sausage, shishito peppers, scallions and sesame oil. Just plan to either wait for a table, or make peace with dining during off-peak hours: you are not the only one with a sudden, undeniable craving for a wood-fired pizza.

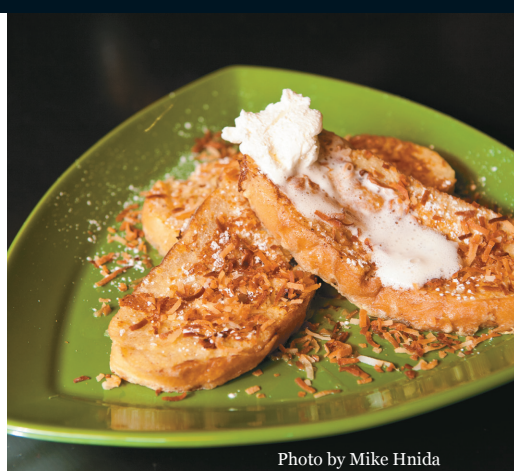


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Photos by Steve Young-Burns, PastureLand.

## SITTING AT **BRET'S** TABLE

ON A crisp winter afternoon, I was invited inside the warm Longfellow neighborhood home of Bret Bannon and his partner Jon Templeton. Whisked into a stunning kitchen I think I shouted an obscenity and hugged the marble island. Ever the gracious host, Bannon served black olive-studded shortbread and poured glasses of a homemade aperitif made from green walnuts and red wine. The plates that the cookies were served on had come from France, once residing in the former home of Julia Child (although the plates weren't actually hers). Close enough for a food fan like me. We discussed Southern hospitality, his passion for feeding friends, and how it's inextricably woven into his Catholic faith.



**Where did you grow up?**

In northern Florida, just south of Jacksonville.

**Do you remember the first thing you learned to cook?**

Two things. I remember making my mom breakfast for Mother's Day. I don't remember the food, but I remember the coffee in this China cup looked so pale, so I added more instant coffee to it. Then I remember in the Boy Scouts, I was an Eagle Scout, so a lot of foods over the fire. I was one of six kids – a big Catholic family, there was a lot of Chef Boyardee.

**How did you end up in Minnesota?**

I went to graduate school at St. John's.

**What did you study there?**

Church music. I came up here sight unseen.

**How did you get into cooking?**

Well, I was working for the Catholic Church. One day I was walking past Cooks of Crocus Hill in Saint Paul and saw they had a sign advertising for teaching assistants. It was a voluntary position then. They paid \$20 gift certificates for every class.

I assisted Zoe Francois, Rocco DiSpirito, Joanne Weir, Marcus Samuelsson, and Andrew Zimmern and learned on the job. This was when Andrew was the chef at Cafe Un Deux Trois. I asked him if I could come in and stage. I got to work with Zoe when she was the pastry chef at the Local. Then I went out to Park Avenue Cafe in New York City. It was really there, in New York, that I realized that I didn't want to be a chef, that I would rather teach.

**I saw on your website that you guide tours through France and stay at Julia Child's home. When is the next trip?**

We're hoping to do a truffle hunt in February. The home is where Julia and Paul Child lived while she was writing *Mastering the Art of French Cooking II*. Kathy, who owns the home, has said this will be the last year that we'll be doing this. Next year would be Julia's 100th birthday.



**What inspires you most about teaching?**

I love having people have that A-ha moment, where they drop the barrier around this mystery of cooking.

It's like when I was with the Church and teaching people how to pray in public. It's not something that comes naturally. 1,000 people doing the same thing at the same time. It's the same thing as having people around my table. It's a sacred moment. Dinner at the table, the shared meal is the foretaste of the heavenly banquet. Which brings us back to the Church, but that's what sharing a meal is. It doesn't matter if it's paper towel napkins and take-out Chinese, it's not what the meal is, it's about the sharing. That's why I always begin with an aperitif, it's very traditional in France to serve homemade spirits and a little something to eat, just enough to whet the appetite. It's a symbol of sharing, this is mine, for you. Which goes back to liturgy – plus, Southern hospitality. We would always offer someone a cup of coffee or sweet tea.

**It's obvious that much of your life and philosophy with living is dedicated to your Catholic Faith. It must be difficult to face the fact that the Church refuses to recognize same-sex unions or allow openly gay members to worship.**

I thought about giving it all up – the church. But I was *baptized* into this religion. I have a right to practice my religion. My God loves me for who I am. I struggled – for years I struggled – I was 28 when I came out. It's just very sad. I love teaching, love liturgy. More and more...it's more hateful. That's why sharing a meal around a table, it's an extension of my faith. It's always that foretaste to the last meal.

I have a friend of mine that works with Alain Ducasse at his restaurant in the South of France, in a former monastery. I've always said that if I knew I had two days before dying, I would want to fly out there and have my final meal there.

It's not the presentation, it's the wonder, the glory, the conversation and the laughter that I love. That's what heaven is. That's what the Father is all about. Well, it better be – if I show up and that's not heaven, I'm going to be pissed.

**Where can we find you?**

I'm teaching at Cooks on Crocus Hill, Chef's Abode in Mendota Heights, plus I do private classes, if people would like to hire me to come into their homes. ■

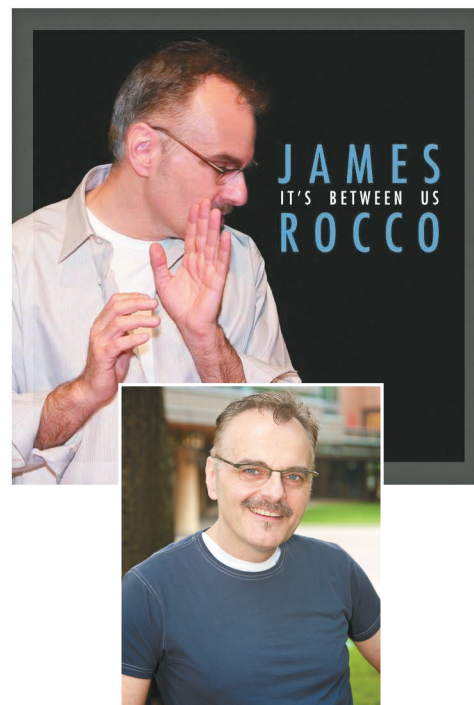
For more information on Bret's classes or to travel with him to Julia Child's home in France to hunt for truffles, find him on the web at [www.bretstable.com](http://www.bretstable.com)





# JAMES ROCCO, ROCKER

→ Most people in the local arts community know James Rocco as a producing artistic director at the Ordway Center, where he has had a hand in many of the recent original productions at the St. Paul venue. But the mild-mannered producer has a secret identity.



Rocco is a rocker.

From his earliest days, Rocco dreamed of rock 'n' roll glory, and spent his early adulthood working the road as he scratched and clawed for success. While he was able to make a living at it, his greater dreams – including his own album – never came true. The stage called, and Rocco found greater success as an actor and director.

The dream lived on, however. This past fall, Rocco issued his debut album, *It's Between Us*. Or, as he prefers to think of it, his re-debut, showcasing a return to the love that first brought him into the entertainment business 40 years ago.

"I just started thinking it was always my dream. It was what I had trained for and what I had done most of my young life doing and fantasizing about. I hemmed and hawed about it. A guy my age shouldn't do this. It's a thing of the past," he says. "A friend encouraged me and I had a gas doing it. It was such fun to go back to it and just do what I knew what I wanted to do."

The 10-cut album spotlights numerous influences, but keeps a steady rock 'n' roll vibe throughout, with cuts by Jackson Browne, Lucinda Williams, Jimmy Webb

and Diane Warren.

He's even heard back from one of the composers, Jennifer Warnes. "She was really complementary to me. I was blown away, as her version of the song ("Lights of Louisianne") is definitive. Mine was just a tribute to her. I've been floating on a cloud," Rocco says.

Playing music was always a dream for Rocco. "I was in love with American Bandstand the top 40 radio. As soon as I could handle it, I had a record player," he says. His youthful interest soon turned to professional gigs. In fact, he was featured in *Modern Screen* magazine after recording a session with Frank Sinatra.

"I spent seven years just performing in clubs and doing recordings and jingles, but I kept getting pulled into the theater. I auditioned for *Cats* in New York on a lark and got a part as the Rum Tum Tugger. After that, I got a good series of theater things, so I was slowly moving away from rock 'n' roll and pop."

Eventually, life in the theater – as a performer and then choreographer and director, before turning to producing – took over, and the music dreams were put on a shelf. "I was making a living as a rock musician,

but I couldn't see any growth in it. I couldn't see what would happen after I wasn't able to around in leather pants and cowboy boots."

Rocco slowly dipped his toe back into music in recent years. "I had no idea if I could sing," he says. "I knew I didn't have the control of my voice the way I used to, but I also knew I was more mature and could interpret the songs in a different way. Slowly, I got it back together."

Once the sessions began with co-producer Raymond Berg and a small combo of musicians, Rocco felt the old thrill. "Hours would go by and I would have done nothing but music for eight hours. That's how it has always been with me and music. It made me feel alive," he says.

In the months since the album came out, Rocco has found some success, from having it sell out in local stores that carry it to reaching the charts.

And his dual identity cuts both ways. "It's funny. The people who knew me in the lifetime when I sang with the likes of Herbie Hancock, can't believe I'm an arts administrator."

*It's Between Us* is available in local stores, at Amazon and CD Baby, and on iTunes. ■



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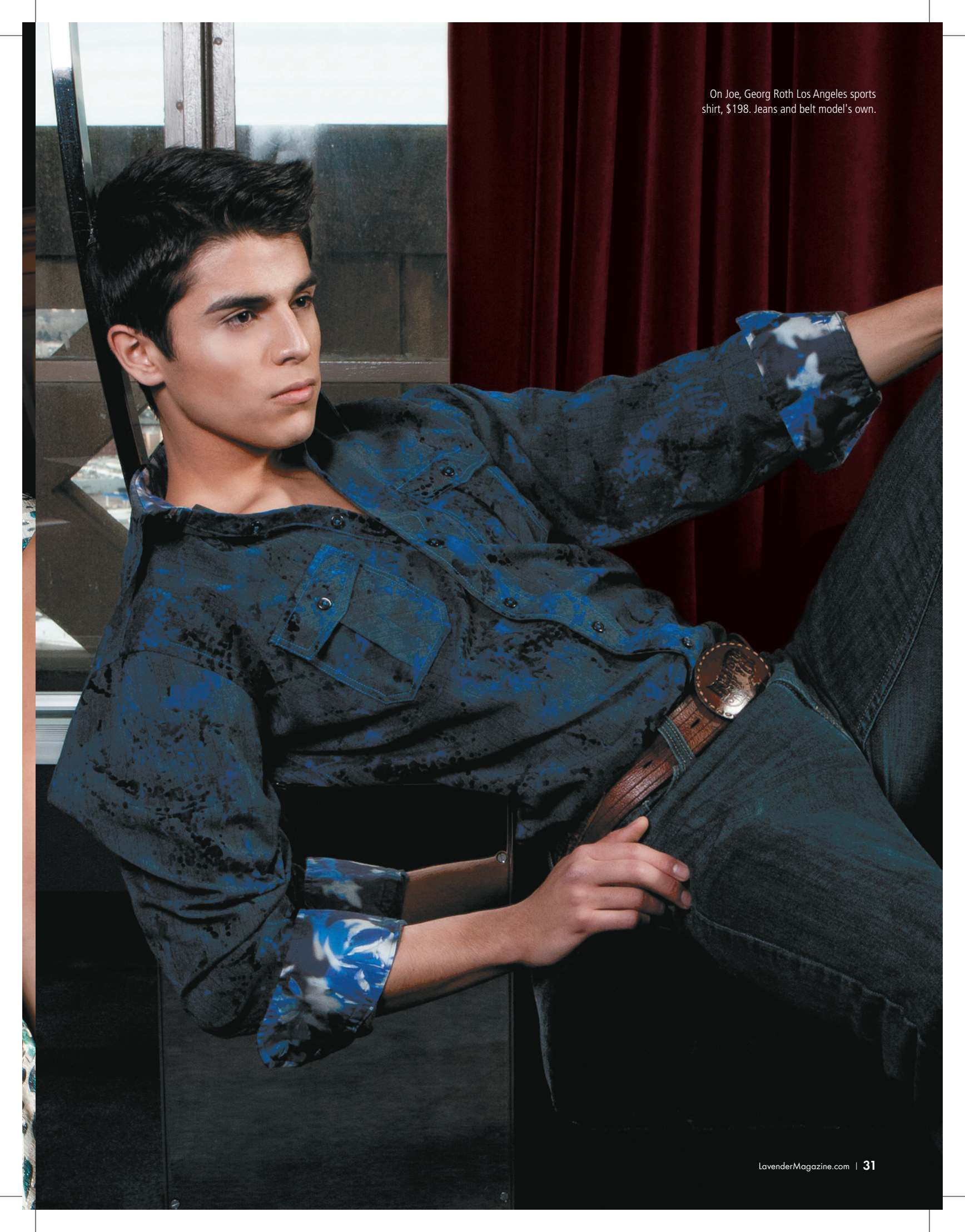


On Aleah, Designs by Tatyana  
Cinderella Leopard dress, \$150.

# Evocative PARTY

Hair & Makeup by Sam Ploetz and Sara VanderPloeg with East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Salon, e42salon.com. Photography by Mike Hnida. Models: Aleah, Andrea, Angel, Joe, Bryce, and Richard with ModelMayhem.com. Women's clothing and accessories provided by Bettie Page at Mall of America. Men's clothing provided by J. NOVACHIS at 50<sup>th</sup> & France. Shot on location at Prohibition Bar at the W Hotel - FOSHAY. Special thanks to Molly O'Rourke.





On Joe, Georg Roth Los Angeles sports shirt, \$198. Jeans and belt model's own.



On Andrea, Designs by Tatyana Ella Royal Blue dress, \$148. PinUp Couture Bombshell Silver heels, \$48. Lux de Ville Starlite Gold clutch, \$38.40. On Angel, Designs by Tatyana Glam Black dress, \$118, and Furtastic Marilyn bolero, \$50. PinUp Couture Bombshell Red heels, \$48. Lux de Ville Femme Fatal Kiss Lock Leopard handbag, \$80.



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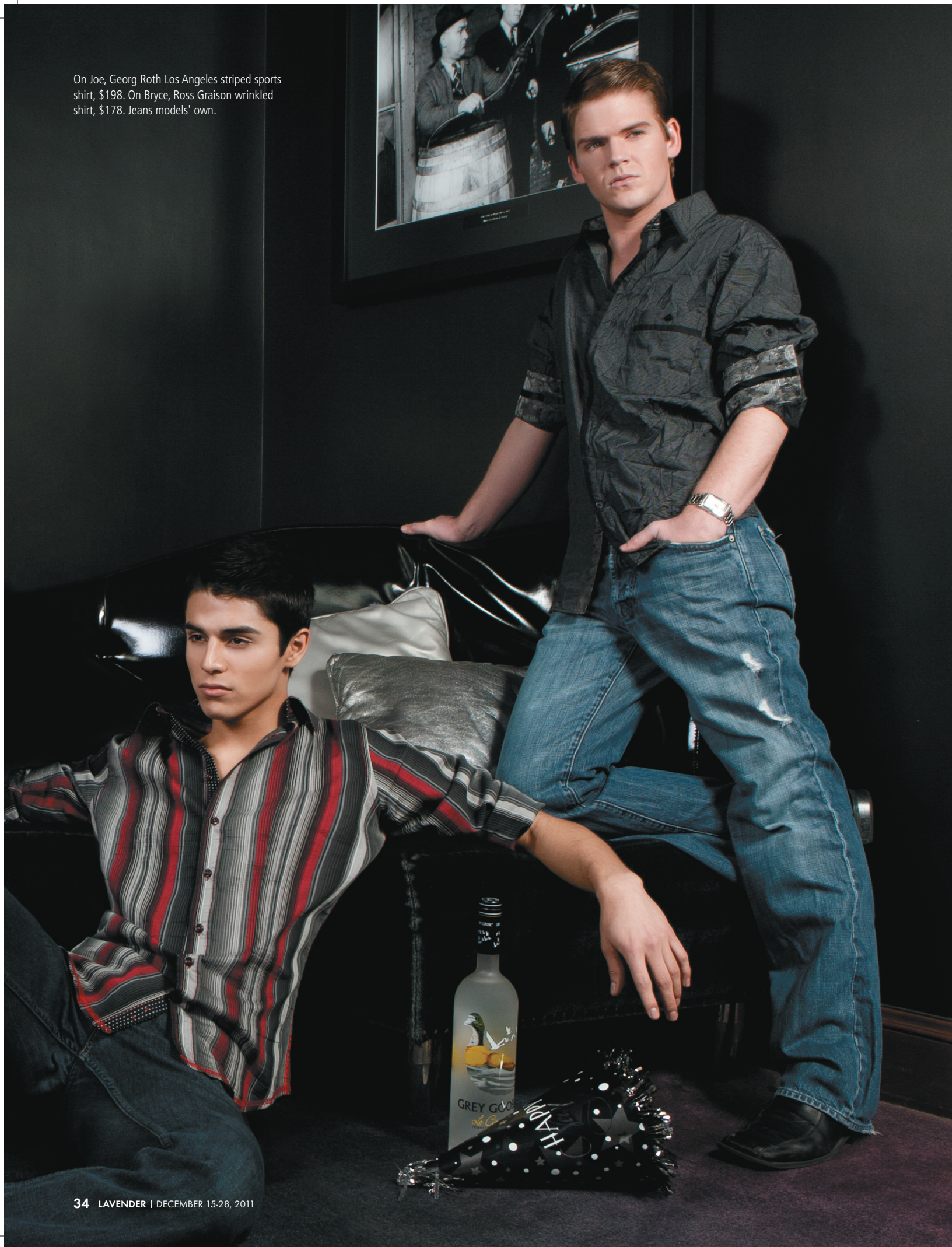
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## Performing Arts 2011 Year in Review

### PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS OF THE YEAR

The Opening of the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts & The Center of the Margins Festival of Plays About Disability, Mixed Blood Theatre

### BEST THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

1. *Leave*, Urban Samurai
2. *The Ravagers*, Savage Umbrella
3. *August: Osage County*, Park Square
4. *The Pride*, Pillsbury House
5. *Ajax in Iraq*, Frank Theatre
6. *The Winter's Tale*, Guthrie Theater
7. *Uncle Vanya*, Gremlin Theatre
8. *Street Scene*, Girl Friday Productions
9. *Cabaret*, Frank Theatre
10. *Beyond Therapy*, Theatre in the Round Players *Opus*, Park Square  
*The Secret Language of Wishes*, Mixed Blood (tie)



*The Pride*. Photo by Michal Daniel

### BEST REVIVAL OF A QUEER CLASSIC

*The Maids*, Gonzo Group

### BEST SHOW FROM OUT OF TOWN (TIE)

*Cavalria*, The Big Top at West End  
*La Cage Aux Folles*, State Theatre

### THEATER ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Craig Johnson, title role actor and script adapter, *Uncle Vanya*; director, *Beyond Therapy* & *Street Scene*

### PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR & BEST ACTRESS (NON-MUSICAL)

Barbara Kingsley, *August: Osage County*



*True West*. Photo by Thomas Sandelands

### BEST ACTOR

Peter Christian Hansen, *True West*, Torch Theatre

### BEST ACTOR (MUSICAL) TIE

Dan Lundin, *bare*, Minneapolis Musical Theatre  
Dennis Spears, *I Wish You Love*, Penumbra Theatre

### BEST ACTRESS (MUSICAL)

Jevetta Steele, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Penumbra Theatre

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR (MUSICAL)

Sam Landman, *The Sexy Librarian*, Joking Envelope

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS (MUSICAL) TIE

Melissa Hart, *Cabaret*  
Kim Kivens, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, Minneapolis Musical Theatre

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR (NON-MUSICAL)

Bradley Greenwald, *Hamlet*, Jungle Theater

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS (NON-MUSICAL)

Helen Carey, *The Winter's Tale*

### BEST CROSSGENDER PERFORMANCE

Luke Weber, *The Maids*

### BEST SOLO PERFORMANCE

Ali Rose Dachis, *The Edge of Our Bodies*, Guthrie



**BEST CLASSICAL LEAD PERFORMANCE**

Stephen Yoakam, *The Burial at Thebes*, Guthrie

**BEST REVIVAL PERFORMANCE**

Bradley Greenwald, *I Am My Own Wife*, Jungle

**FUNNIEST PERFORMANCE**

Wendy Lehr, *Mercy Watson to the Rescue*, Children's Theatre Company

**BEST PERFORMANCES FROM OUT OF TOWN**

Christopher Sieber, Leading Role, *La Cage Aux Folles*, State Theatre

John Fugelsang, Solo Role, *The Sexy Liberal Show*, State Theatre

Meghann Fahy & Curt Hansen, Supporting Actor & Actress, *Next to Normal*, Ordway

**BEST DIRECTOR**

Wendy Knox, *Ajax in Iraq* & *Cabaret*

**BEST THEATER COMPOSER**

Mike Hallenbeck, *I Like You*, Red Eye Collaboration & *The Sexy Librarian*



*Cabaret*. Photo by Tony Nelson.

**BEST MUSICAL DIRECTION**

Michael Croswell, *Cabaret*

**BEST CHOREOGRAPHER**

David Bolger, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Guthrie

**BEST SET DESIGN**

Large House: John Coyne, *Charley's Aunt*, Guthrie

Small House: Vicki Smith, *Two Trains Running*, Penumbra

**BEST COSTUME DESIGN**

Large House: Linda Cho, *The Winter's Tale*

Small House: (tie) Kathy Cole, *Street Scene* & A. Emily Heaney, *Uncle Vanya*



*Uncle Vanya*. Photo by Tamatha Miller

**BEST LIGHTING DESIGN**

Christopher Akerlind, *The Burial at Thebes*

**BEST SOUND DESIGN**

Elliot Durko Lynch, *The Ravagers*

**VIDEO DESIGN**

Martin Gwinup, *I Wish You Love*

**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATER FOR YOUTH**

*MEAN*, Youth Performance Company,

*bloodymerryjammyparty*, Blank Slate Theatre

**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN PERFORMANCE ART**

Peligro, *Patrick's Cabaret*

**OUTSTANDING FEATURED DANCER**

Myron Johnson, *Songs for a Swan*, Ballet of the Dolls

**OUTSTANDING NEW DANCE WORK**

*Storm*, Zenon Dance Company

**OUTSTANDING DANCE REVIVALS**

*Deluxe Edition*, Zenon

*Rumblings*, Minnesota Dance Theatre

*Social Movements*, James Sewell Ballet

**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN STAGE MOVEMENT**

*7-Shot Symphony*, Live Action Set

**OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN OPERA**

*Silent Night*, Minnesota Opera





## Atons Holiday Fundraiser

THE ATONS of Minneapolis held their traditional Holiday Fundraiser on Sunday, December 4, in Minneapolis. There was food, drink and general merriment, along with live and silent auctions, two bootblacks, holiday photos with Leather Santa and his Naughty Elf, and a food drive that collected 900 pounds of food for The Aliveness Project.

This year's event raised approximately \$2,000, which was donated to OutFront Minnesota Community Services to provide education about the benefits of marriage equality (in preparation for the November 2012 vote on the proposed Minnesota state constitutional amendment to limit marriage to one man and one woman).

My thanks to Atons member Andrew Bertke for allowing me to share some of his photos of this event. You'll find many more photos from this year's Atons Holiday Fundraiser online at the Lavender Magazine website: [www.lavendermagazine.com/our-lives/atons-holiday-fundraiser/](http://www.lavendermagazine.com/our-lives/atons-holiday-fundraiser/). Enjoy them all, and—whatever you celebrate, however you celebrate it—Happy Holidays from Leather Life! ■



Photos by Andrew Bertke

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## Lisa McDonald and George Soule – Holiday Entertaining on a Grand Scale

IT'S A bold proclamation to claim the first Saturday in December for your annual holiday party, but George Soule and Lisa McDonald have done just that for the past 22 years. This is more than a sweater-laden get-together with punch and cookies; more than 250 guests squeeze into their home on Lake Harriet, ringing in the season in a grand way.



The cover of this year's invitation; Lisa McDonald & George Soule with their dogs Dante & Lulu. Photo Courtesy of Lisa McDonald

Lisa and George credit their large guest list to George's work as an attorney and Lisa's political background (she's a former Minneapolis City Councilmember and candidate for mayor). Originally designed to entertain clients and co-workers, the party is now a mix of folks from the legal, political, judicial, and creative worlds. "People love this party because they can catch up with folks they might not see all year," says Lisa. "Our guests have a chance to reconnect with dear friends and meet new faces."

Even in a good-sized home, when you have that many guests, space is at a premium. To take the pressure off, Lisa and George began renting a tent for the backyard a few years ago. Connected to the living room via a breezeway, the heated tent is complete with carpet and decorations. It also holds an additional bar, keeping service moving. Steps from the tent on the patio are a roaring fire pit and comfortable furniture, all under the sparkle of holiday lights. Marshmallows are available for toasting!



Lisa loves candlelight, especially on the front walk. Photo by Sean Ryan



Lisa and George send out invitations the second week of November, three weeks before the party. Often, the invitation is a simple flat card with a photograph of Lisa, George, and their beloved two dogs, but don't let the casual picture on the invitation fool you: Lisa has elevated entertaining to the martial arts skill of a ninja.

Food is especially important. Drawing inspiration from her vast cookbook collection and her skills as a former professional pastry chef, Lisa tries something new each year. Half of the food is prepared by the hosts, the other half by a local caterer (Rudolph's). Lisa makes sure everyone gets a bite of her new recipe for the event. Lisa's fortunate friends and family get to sample new menu items throughout the year as Lisa tests them for flavor and ease of preparation. The buffet always includes old favorites, as well as the new items: baked ham, cheesy potatoes and a tasty sausage roll. George is known for his famous chocolate chip cookies. He begins baking days before the party to produce hundreds of these palm-sized beauties. This year's party also featured a traditional layered trifle of fresh fruit and ladyfingers. Lisa credits much of the success of her party to great staff, including the steady oversight of Jerry Beltt, who makes sure things run smoothly in the kitchen so George and Lisa can enjoy their guests.

Lisa selects her holiday décor from a massive collection of items she keeps tucked away on the third floor. Neatly organized by color, theme and year, no theme is done twice. In 2009, the all-white theme gave the feeling of being inside a snow globe, with floating candles and homemade ice lanterns lining the front walk. Last year, the party was a fantasy in red from the ornaments to the lighting. This year, Lisa and George were inspired by cases of Old World ornaments and nostalgic lanterns they've collected over the years.

Although the décor is beautiful, decorations are kept up off the surfaces in order to save space for wine glasses and guests' plates. Missing from the party is a traditional Christmas tree. "It just gets in the way," says Lisa, "and too many of my favorite ornaments were getting broken during the party." She and George set up their tree during the week after the party. With four Saturdays between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the

pressure to have the party requires the full package: a home people love to see, food you look forward to all year, and a guest list no one would want to be excluded from. Good hosts can make guest feel comfortable and welcome, whether it's a small group of intimates or 250 of your closest friends. Lisa and deliver the full package, year after year. ◻



A seasonal buffet is set in the dining room; collections of glass and pottery paired with vintage ornaments and a fresh wreath complete the decor in the living room. Photos by Sean Ryan



George's famous chocolate chip cookies (see recipe). Photo by Sean Ryan

## George's Famous Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes about 3 dozen cookies

### INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
1/3 cup Blue Bonnet margarine, softened  
1/3 cup shortening  
1 egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup chopped nuts  
1 package (6 ounces) semi-sweet chocolate chips

### METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Cream the sugar, margarine, shortening, egg, and vanilla together. Stir in remaining ingredients until combined. (George prefers to mix this dough by hand.)

Form balls with the dough using a tablespoon. Place balls on an ungreased cookie sheet about 3 inches apart. (What makes George's cookies unique is their size, so feel free to go larger with the dough balls.)

Bake in the oven for 8-10 minutes until light golden brown in color. Allow the cookies to cool on the sheet before removing.





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**'Not Gay Enough' Softball Players Settle Suit**  
SFGate reports that three members of an amateur gay softball team have settled their lawsuit against the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance. The men sued the organization after their team was disqualified for not having enough gay players. The settlement comes one week after a US district judge ruled that the Alliance had the right to limit the number of heterosexuals who could play on a team. As part of the settlement, the men will receive their second place trophy back, along with an undisclosed sum.

#### **Democratic Rep. Barney Frank Announces Retirement**

The Associated Press reports that Dem. Rep. Barney Frank, the first voluntarily openly gay member of Congress has announced he will retire at the end of his current term; his 16th. "There are other things I would like to do with my life," Frank, 71, said he hopes to remain active on issues that matter to him after his retirement.

#### **Nigeria Senate Approves Bill Banning Gay Marriage, Groups, PDA**

The Washington Post reports that Nigeria's Senate has voted to criminalize gay marriage, gay

advocacy groups and same-sex public displays of affection. Gay sex is already illegal in Nigeria and under the new legislation, couples who marry could face up to 14 years in prison.

#### **Senate Lets Chaplains Opt Out of Gay Weddings**

The Army Times reports that the US Senate approved an amendment to the defense authorization bill that allows military chaplains to refuse to perform gay marriages. The measure was introduced by MI Republican Sen. Roger Wicker who said, "This amendment will allow the chaplains of our armed forces to maintain

the freedom of conscience necessary to serve their nation and their religion without conflict."

#### **NY Judge Lets Anti-Gay Marriage Lawsuit Proceed**

The Wall Street Journal reports that a NY state judge has refused to dismiss a lawsuit challenging the state's gay marriage legislation. State Supreme Court Judge Robert Wiggins said there was an issue whether the state's open meetings law was violated.

#### **Church of Scotland against gay marriage law change**

The BBC reports that the Church of Scotland has told the Scottish government that it should not allow gay marriages. The government launched a 14 week consultation over whether to legalize gay marriage, but the Church of Scotland, along with The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland are against the change. A recent Scottish Social Attitudes survey found more than 60% of people believe same-sex couples should have the right to marry.

#### **Gay Groups Boycott Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive**

MSNBC reports that gay rights groups are urging people to boycott donations to the Salvation Army this holiday season, arguing that the church has a history of anti-GLBT discrimination. Andy Thayer, co-founder of the Gay Liberation Network told MSNBC, "We are urging a boycott of the Salvation Army because it uses its selective interpretation of the Bible to promote discrimination against LGBT people in employment benefits and leadership positions within the Army." A spokesman for the Salvation Army responded, saying, "In our policies, in our practices, in our programs and in our eligibility for any service within the Salvation Army, there is not a request for any details concerning sexual orientation."

#### **Top Marine Says Service Embracing Gay Ban Repeal**

The Associated Press reports that top US marine, General James F. Amos says the Marines have handled the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' well. Amos previously opposed repealing the ban during wartime. He told the Associated Press last week, "I'm very pleased with how it has gone."

#### **Passengers Claim United Agent Used Gay Slur At DIA**

Denver's 7News reports that United Airlines is investigating a complaint from a gay couple claiming they were called faggots by an agent at Denver International Airport. Billy Canu told 7News he and his partner complained to a manager about a rude employee. Canu claims the manager escalated the situation, first calling them idiots then faggots as they walked away. A spokeswoman for United said, "We have received this complaint and are reviewing, and we will reach out to the customer directly."

#### **T.I. Defends Tracy Morgan, Calls Gay Activists 'Not American'**

Reuters reports that rapper and MTV reality star Clifford Joseph Harris Jr (aka T.I.) said in a recent interview that gay activists were overly sensitive in response to comedian Tracy Morgan's comments last summer that he'd kill his son if he found out he were gay. "They're like, 'If you have an opinion against us, we're gonna shut you down. That's not American,'" said Harris. ■



MINNEAPOLIS JEWISH  
**HUMOR**  
FESTIVAL

### 3RD ANNUAL MINNEAPOLIS JEWISH HUMOR FESTIVAL

The 3rd Annual Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival (MJHF) will be held January 14-28, 2012, at the Sabes Jewish Community Center in Minneapolis. The MJHF combines one-act plays, one-person shows, music performance, stand-up and improvisational comedy, storytelling, film, visual art, and workshops in celebration of the Jewish contribution to the world of humor as presented Jewish and non-Jewish performing and visual artists, teachers, and arts collaborators. The MJHF offers a variety of work that somehow touches on Jewish tradition, family, identity, religion, culture, or ideas. "Jewish" can mean vastly different things to different people, content can be very obvious or quite subtle, or somewhere in between. Whatever, wherever, and whomever it is, it's all funny. Very funny.



Photo by Sophia Hantzes

Pictured: Alfonso Wenker, Director of Communications and Development of Pfund; Kit Yan, Emcee and spoken word artist and activist; and Marta Alvarado, Conference and Meetings Manager of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

### A QUEER AND TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOR GATHERING TO SUPPORT OUR LIBERATION AND SELF DETERMINATION

PFund Foundation, the only Minnesota foundation dedicated exclusively to LGBT equality, and the Astraea Foundation for Justice, a national LGBT grantmaker, hosted the first-ever national gathering of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people of color organizations December 2-4, 2011, in Minneapolis. The BOLD Gathering is the culmination of the four-year Racial Equity Initiative, a funding project aimed at supporting LGBT people of color nonprofits. As the first national gathering of LGBT people of color organizations in the United States, it was an opportunity to convene at this complex economic and political moment, providing an opportunity to build organizing skills, sharpen thinking, strengthen the collective voice and create a vision for the future that speaks directly to histories of resilience, creativity, desire, passion and vision.




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2011 PERSON OF THE YEAR

# JOHN KRIESEL

## — A PROFILE IN COURAGE

W

by John Townsend / Photos by Sophia Hantzes

While serving courageously with the Minnesota National Guard in Iraq in 2006, John Kriesel lost both legs because of an IED (roadside bomb). Four years later he was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives for District 57A, which includes parts of Dakota and Washington counties. That victory alone was enough to garner him headlines, but in May of this year he garnered national attention again. This was for speaking passionately and eloquently on the House floor, dissenting with the majority of his fellow Republicans who sent a constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage to a 2012 referendum to be voted on by Minnesota's electorate. Essentially, the Purple Heart medalist stood up to his own party's push to put the right to discriminate up to popular vote.

This act of moral courage made the 30 year-old not a pariah, but a YouTube sensation across the nation. Though he's still proud to be a Republican, Kriesel stands on principle first and the belief in every American's right to the pursuit of happiness. He also wrote his autobiographical *Still Standing* with Jim Kosmo, and works as a private marketing and advertising contractor to the Minnesota National Guard, and as a contributor KFAN-AM 1130 radio.

I was privileged to speak with the Representative and *Lavender's* Person of the Year 2011 at his office in St. Paul.









**JT: What compelled you to come out against the Minnesota amendment to ban same sex marriage?**

JK: It's just something I feel strongly about. It's something I didn't think a whole lot about until I ran for office. And towards the end, when we were nearing election day, I think it was an editorial board with the Star Tribune that had brought up some social issues. And you get asked about abortion a lot. You get asked about certain things a lot. And same sex marriage wasn't something that came up too much. But that, I believe, was the time it did come up and I came home and talked to my wife.

It's not something I prepared for. I spoke from my heart and said I love my wife so much and I just don't understand why anybody would want to take that away from somebody else.

I try to put myself in other people's shoes. When I got elected, the way I thought, the way I looked at things changed. Not to mention, when I got hurt in Iraq, everything changed. I realized that now I just wasn't making decisions that affected my wife and my two sons. I had to (now) make decisions that reflect not only the best interests of the (approximately) 40,000 people in my district,

but the greater good of the state.

At that time I didn't know anybody that was gay. I didn't have any gay friends. I've gained some now. But you have to put yourself in their situation. I would be so -not angry- as much, but just hurt, devastated, if the government said, you can be with your wife, but you can't marry her. You can't share that. I just don't get it.

And when I said, I wonder what that would be like, that's when I said: there is no way. We can't let this happen. And I think I was naive enough to think it wasn't going to come up during session. And was hopeful it wasn't going to come up during session. But once I was convinced that it was, I wanted to make it known right from the start where I stood. There wasn't going to be any goofin' around. And I said here's where I'm at and I'm not moving. Here's why I'm where I'm at.

**JT: Have you gotten flack from friends, colleagues, family, anybody else?**

JK: Not colleagues. And I think that was prevented by coming out against it so early and saying this is where I'm at. I had one person come up to me on the floor and say 'really would like you with us.' And it wasn't leader-

ship or anything. It was one colleague who said we'd really love your support. And I said, you know where I'm at. Go sit down. And that's that. That's the only time. The Speaker knew where I was at, respected it, and that's the thing. We can have a respectful debate about it. There are people that don't agree with it. They want the amendment to pass. They want it to pass ultimately. And I disagree with them but I respect their position.

This issue I have is when there are people that don't believe in this. They wanted to vote no but they were too scared and that's tough for me. Coming from a military background, surrounded by people who do what's right and what they believe in, no matter what cost. Up to, and including their life. And then you come to a situation where certain people are concerned about re-election or getting endorsed or whatever reasons there are and it influences the way they vote. And I don't wanna make this sound like that's a lot of people. It's not. At all. So I guess as frustrating as that was, I was frustrated more in the people that I know (who) wanted to vote no and just didn't. And that's the part that bothers me because I'd like to think that I vote the way I believe and not based on what's best for my career.

continues on page 61



Passionate scenes from the Capitol--the people with whom Rep. Kriesel was standing when he gave his impassioned speech on May 21, 2011. Photos by Sophia Hantzes

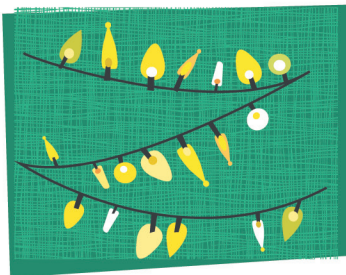


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# through the rain:

## A PORTRAIT OF HOMELESS YOUTH

*This story is true. Sincere thanks to Stephan Parker for his courage in sharing it.*

THE BOY SITS on a park bench one night, and he stares. He stares at homes, some with their lights on; others quieted for the night. He stares at the neighborhood playground. And he stares at the sky. It will rain soon.

The boy takes a breath, stands, and moves reluctantly through unkempt grass toward the jungle gym. He climbs into the mouth of a tube slide and pushes himself into the middle. He positions himself as comfortably as he can, and again he stares. He stares at dirty plastic, backlit by moonlight. And he cries.

The boy is Stephan Joseph Parker. He is 18 years old. He is homeless. He's been without a house to live in for six months, but he doesn't remember when he ever felt safe calling some place home.

Rain starts to drizzle on Stephan's orange tube slide. The rain echoes inside. Everything echoes inside. So many families surround him—including his own. So many beds. So many goodnight kisses and "I Love You's".

So many opportunities to wonder, "Why can't that be me?"

Stephan closes his eyes, and he remembers...

There are jumbo blocks and other kids. Cousins. Stephan wants them to stop taking his blocks, but they won't. He hides with his toys under the kitchen table. This is his first memory.

There is Grandpa, the protector. Stephan's mother and stepfather are mentally ill; his grandmother and grandfather raise Stephan until he is 7 years old, when Grandpa dies, and things begin to change.

Stephan lives in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, then. His family consists of his Granny, mom and step dad, aunt and uncle, and a few cousins. He gets along best with his Granny, though she sometimes calls Stephan "fat" and "like his mother." Stephan doesn't blame his grandmother for her insensitivity; her behavior has been this way since her stroke.

Unable to care for Stephan alone after his grandfather's death, Granny sends him to live with his mom and step-dad when he is 8 years old. The abuse begins almost immediately.

The family lives in an old trailer on an otherwise barren lot. Food stamps and child welfare provide food and shelter, but electricity and running water are unattainable luxuries. Stephan's stepfather digs a hole in the backyard to collect rainwater that the family uses to bathe with (the family affectionately calls this resource "The Puddle"). Stephan's step-dad hits him when he uses more than his fair share of water, but Stephan doesn't blame his stepfather for his temper—"My dad didn't know any better," he says. Drought seasons are particularly difficult.

The trailer is unlivable. Stephan's mother hoards. The house is full of garbage, infested with insects and rats, and thick with a putrid stench Stephan grows accustomed to.



Stephan's mother hoards animals—dogs, cats, mice. Mom cooks for herself and Stephan's step-dad; Stephan and the animals are left with the scraps. He sleeps hungry every night.

Eventually the trailer is condemned, and the family moves out. They find another home elsewhere in Murfreesboro, but Mom's hoarding continues, as does the abuse...

Stephan's mother hits him frequently. She hits him with her fists, remote controls, spatulas, and once, with a skillet (the incident permanently dents Stephan's skull). She comes at Stephan with such ferocity and hatred that Stephan knows she mustn't love him. He goes to the police several times to report the abuse, but he's told that without any physical evidence, they can do nothing but send investigators from child welfare services.

Stephan's mother abuses him sexually at night. She sneaks into Stephan's room as he sleeps and molests him. When he wakes, she tells him to stay quiet. He doesn't understand why she's doing this or what it means. He feels that this is wrong, but this is the only time Stephan feels affection from his mother. So he endures.

Stephan holds out hope for the investigators. They will save him— he knows it. Once they see the filth that he lives in, they'll whisk him away. But they don't. The investigators,

however disgusted with Stephan's living environment, tell him that they can do nothing because two criteria are met, even here: Stephan is fed. Stephan has shelter. He tells no one of the sexual abuse.

Then, salvation. One day, Stephan's mother hits him hard enough to leave a mark, and Stephan wastes no time in running to the police. He shows them what his mother's done, and he's withdrawn from his parents and put into the foster care system.

Stephan believes this means he's been rescued. That everything will be better. Foster care. Stephan likes the sound of it. It sounds like hope, though it turns out to be anything but...

After enduring his mother's abuse and stepfather's indifference for 5 years, Stephan enters foster care when he's 13 years old. Stephan moves into a nice home; it's clean and warm. He lives

with four girls: one biological child, and three foster children. The foster mom is strict. She forbids the use of internet, phone, and prohibits Stephan from visiting or calling his grandmother.

He builds a friendship with one of his foster sisters, and the pair decide to sneak out to break free from the suffocation of the house.

One night after climbing out through their bedroom window, Stephan and his foster sister are approached by a car full of men in their 20s. They invite Stephan and his sister to a party. The pair accept, and pile into the car. Stephan's foster sister performs oral sex on one of the men, and after Stephan resists the same, another man rapes him at the party. The men drop the kids off at home afterward. Stephan's foster mom scolds him for being a liar when he tells about being raped. Stephan is placed into a second foster care home.

Stephan will rotate through 6 different homes over the next 4





years. He'll have 10 different social workers, and he'll go to 9 different high schools.

His last foster care home has the most promise: an elderly couple Stephan met after a peer at school convinced Stephan to attend church. The couple provides Stephan with peaceful nights and a full stomach. Things go wonderfully until the couple discovers Stephan is gay.

After he posts a blog on MySpace about being gay, peers at the Baptist high school he attends confront and bully Stephan online. He tells his bullies to "fuck off," and they respond by telling the school principal. Stephan's principal phones his new foster family to tell them Stephan is gay, and that, in order to stay enrolled in school, Stephan will need to stand before the entire congregation of the Baptist church and apologize for his sins. His foster family agrees with his principal, and threatens to kick Stephen out if he doesn't comply.

Stephan responds to his foster parents: "Fuck off."

It isn't lost on Stephan that no one wants him. At least that's how it feels. If his own family can't love him, if he can find no friends who love him, if his social workers, foster homes—anyone—can't love him... Why should he?

So Stephan decides to give everyone what he thinks they want.

Stephan decides to end his life. At 13, Stephan attempts to overdose on handfuls of over-the-counter headache medicine and sleep aids. The massive intake knocks Stephan out, but he's up soon, dry heaving for hours.

At 14, Stephan cleans a woman's house for extra money. She's a cop. During one visit, she leaves her gun belt on her bedroom dresser. Stephan doesn't hesitate. He pulls the gun out of its holster, puts it to his head, and pulls the trigger. Nothing.

Stephan attempts suicide 11 more times over the next 6 years.

There is a bright spot in these years. Her name is Heather. Stephan meets her in 7th grade, when he still lives with his mom and step-dad. Heather is Stephan's friend—the girl who cried with Stephan when his mother told him to die. She means everything to him, because she's all he has. She is beautiful and kind. Her life is what one might call normal, but what Stephan calls... extraordinary.

Her mother and father care for her. She

gets Christmas presents and birthday parties.

She has a warm bed, hot water, and food to eat. She watches movies and plays with toys. Her clothes are new and her body is clean. Heather's family welcomes Stephan over for dinner and sleepovers. Stephan fantasizes on these nights that this is his life, too. That he and Heather are family, and that her parents are his.

The boy opens his eyes. The sun is rising. Families will start pouring into the playground soon. Stephan lets himself out of his tube slide, stretches, and starts his day. He thinks about Heather. About how wonderful she is.

As usual, Stephan will visit his grandmother today. She's as crude as ever, but Stephan loves her. He'll have to face his hateful aunt who refused to take Stephan in. She's always visiting Granny. But it'll give Stephan some time to wash up, then poke around town for food, and maybe look for a new tube slide to sleep in tonight.

Like any other day, Stephan will wonder if this will be the rest of his life. He'll see the images he can't remove from his mind. And, like any other day, Stephan will cry.

But today won't be like any other day. Today, Stephan's grandmother will tell him that she loves him. And at 18 years old, this will be the first time in his life Stephan can ever remember hearing "I love you."

Stephan Parker is now 23 years old. After 6 months of living on the street in Murfreesboro and years of emotional and physical abuse, Stephan lives now the life we might call extraordinary.

Stephan moved back and forth from Murfreesboro to Onamina, MN, for a year after being homeless. He found in Onamina an adult learning center that helped him finish his high school diploma; he met here a school counselor who informed Stephan about a program in Brainerd, MN, called Lutheran Social Services (LSS).

Stephan moved to Brainerd to enroll in





LSS, and there he met Kathy Sauve and Abby Goetz, Stephan's case manager. "They taught me everything," Stephan says. "They taught me to trust people. I learned to be myself, and to be OK with myself."

Stephan credits LSS for turning his life around. He says, despite the name, the organization has never pushed a religious agenda on him. It helped him find affordable housing, and provided him an opportunity to volunteer his time to the community.

Stephan still lives in Brainerd. He is studying to become a social worker to help kids like himself. He paints. He dreams of one day moving to the Twin Cities to be part of a bigger GLBT community: "I'm grateful for everything I have here," he says, but "Brainerd can be boring." He smiles.

He lives with his cat, Sophie; a cat, Stephan proudly announces, that "hid for the first eight years of her life—until she came to me."

Stephan's story mimics the story of thousands of homeless youth in Minnesota and in the United States. His is a story of success, but not everyone's story ends so well.

**Author's note:** *Stephan Parker is a transgendered female-to-male. He was born "Gail" on December 11, 1987, but he's always felt like Stephan, which is why he's been described as such in the preceding paragraphs.*

*Sincere thanks to Beth Holger-Ambrose, Homeless Youth Services Coordinator for the State of Minnesota; Lan Freitag with United Way Arise Project; and Stephan Parker. Photography by Mike Hnida.*

**"If his own family can't love him, if he can find no friends who love him, if his social workers, foster homes—anyone—can't love him... Why should he?"**







# Local Motion and Inertia Regarding the Crusade against Uganda's Gays & Lesbians

## Part 2 in *Lavender's Uganda* series

WINGSPAN MINISTRY of St. Paul-Reformation Church has endeavored to make the public aware of the mass hysteria fomented against gays and lesbians in Uganda in recent years. (See *Lavender* article An Overview, Issue 430.) Their Global Bridging Initiative hosted Bishop Christopher Senyonjo and his wife Mary, two years ago. For being an ally of gays and lesbians in a nation where the "Kill the Gays" bill almost passed this year, the Bishop, sometimes referred to as the "Bishop Tutu of Uganda," has had his pension taken away by his church and has been routinely ignored for events he would normally have been a part of. Worse yet, his own children have had to change their surnames and to forego interaction with him for fear of violence against them. Though the death penalty aspect of Uganda's antihomosexuality bill (aka "Kill The Gays" bill) was defeated this year, its other ruthlessly draconian aspects could still be voted on and implemented.

Wingspan's Uganda Team Chair Leo Treadway points out, "When a person is identified, or suspected, of being homosexual they are dismissed from their family and their clan – if not attacked or murdered. There is not even a hint of a social service safety net to assist such individuals – certainly not what has developed for GLBT people in the US. Bishop Christopher is attempting to correct the situation, and among the various programs he is attempting to implement, it was the 'Safe House Project' which most caught the eye of Wingspan Ministry of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church. This program became the focal point of our fundraising."

When Ugandan gay rights activist David Kato was brutally murdered this year, in the wake of homophobic hysteria sweeping Uganda, President Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and the Minneapolis City Council all formally condemned it, making the point that antigay persecution is not to be tolerated. As did Congresswoman (4th Dist.) Betty McCollum.

In response to the Ugandan Parliament

considering legislation that would criminalize homosexuality and legalize execution a possible punishment for this crime, McCollum stated this: "The legally sanctioned persecution of a minority group is unacceptable, and this hateful measure is no exception. On January 21, 2011, I joined dozens of my House colleagues in sending a letter urging President Obama to use his diplomatic weight to oppose this legislation and to call for the decriminalization of homosexuality worldwide. In the last Congress, I co-sponsored H. Res 1064, which expressed Congress' unequivocal opposition to the Ugandan legislation. This resolution was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, but unfortunately was not considered before the end of the session."

Democrat McCollum continues, "Be assured that I will closely monitor the situation. As a longstanding supporter of the LGBT community, I will continue working with my colleagues in Congress to champion human rights both at home and abroad."

A spokesperson for Democratic Congressman (5th Dist.) Keith Ellison's office said "Congressman Ellison firmly opposes all persecution and discrimination, and that includes the persecution of and discrimination against GLBT people."

I submitted the following questions to the Communications Directors of metro area Republican Congressmembers Michele Bachmann (6th Dist.), John Kline (2nd Dist.), and Eric Paulsen (3rd Dist.):

1. Is the Representative's office tracking the widespread abuse of lesbians and gays in Uganda?
2. Does the Representative have any thoughts or opinions about the tax-exempt American religious institutions that have been fueling this abuse?
3. Does the Representative support the practice in Uganda of so-called 'corrective' rape to supposedly 'cure' lesbianism?

4. Republicans and some conservative Democrats want strings attached to foreign aid so that no abortions can be performed. So why shouldn't there then be strings attached to foreign aid when women and girls are systematically raped to serve the barbaric superstition that that will stop them from being lesbians?

5. It appears that American evangelicals and Ugandan politicians have received US tax dollars, some of which came from PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief), in the first George W. Bush administration. There has been little transparency about this steady stream of US tax dollars to Uganda and how they have been spent. Yet the Representative and her/his fellow Republican Congress members, while continuously railing against deficit spending in recent years, have not given the American public a full report on the billions it has spent on expensive foreign endeavors, including the billions spent in Uganda.

I got no responses for any of these questions or comment.

One irony in reading these various congressional responses and non-responses is that Ellison, who is a Muslim, is quite clear about his opposition to persecution of gays and lesbians. All of the others are Christian, the religion of Jesus's love and forgiveness, and of those four, only McCollum makes it absolutely clear she is fully against persecution of gays and lesbians. And to her great credit, she is quite adamant.

For those who choose to look, there is a abundant evidence of horrendous homophobic violence and sexism in the Muslim Middle-East and Africa. Therefore, Ellison takes a profound risk in the liberal stands he takes for women and GLBT people. Yet neocon and evangelical media sources often promote the idea that Islam is backward because, unlike Christianity, it never underwent a reformation. Yet, what we see in



Uganda is something that compares to pre-Reformation Christianity such as the Inquisition. It is also just as bad or worse than the post-Reformation Christian group, the Ku Klux Klan or witch burnings in colonial Puritan New England. One wonders, as white American evangelicals have exported their Culture Wars to Africa, have they essentially set Christianity back half a millennia with a bit of Salem and the post-Civil War south thrown in for good measure? Therefore, should Christians still be pointing fingers at Muslims for not ever having had what they call a reformation?

In light of Bachmann's personal pastor joining her presidential campaign as an advisor I asked her office the following: To what degree has the Congresswoman's relationship with Pastor Mac Hammond, who hosts ministry in Uganda, played into her congressional view of the Uganda situation?

I got no answer.

I contacted Bachmann's husband, Marcus's office at Bachmann & Associates Christian Counseling with locations in Lake Elmo and Burnsville. Bachmann holds the controversial view that gay people can turn straight. I asked the following:

Your wife has been criticized for having benefitted from hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal farm subsidies while fervently espousing massive government budget cuts other than military. This raises ethical questions for you:

1. Have you accepted federal funds for your 'reparative' approaches that claim gay males can become straight males?

2. Have boys and youths under age 18 been a part of this sort of treatment? What about the age range of females who may be under such 'reparation'?

3. Have you offered your 'reparative' services for any Uganda mission trips, and if so, did you receive any PEPFAR or other US federal funds for that?

4. Do you support the practice of corrective 'rape' used by some Ugandan evangelical Christians to turn lesbians or women or girls suspected of being lesbians into heterosexual women?

Of course, I asked Mac Hammond of the tax-exempt Living Word Ministry, what his view on all this has been, but he never replied after three requests. Hammond is famous for his 'prosperity gospel' and his conflicts with the IRS. I asked what follows:

Your ministry hosts missionary trips to

Uganda. It most recently charged guests \$2,900 for a 10-12 day mission trip to Uganda in November 2011. Can you give me a breakdown of how that money is spent? And how much money you have taken in over the years for such Uganda trips? And have you accepted PEPFAR funds?

Trip leader for Living Word's Missions Outreach to Uganda is Pastor Kent Otey. I asked him the following:

1. Where have you and your outreach stood regarding the mass hysteria that has swept over gay and lesbian Ugandans in recent years?

2. Were you supportive of recent Ugandan legislative efforts that called for the death penalty against gays and lesbians?

3. What have you told the people you took on your November 2011 missions trip to Uganda about the government's crusade against gays and lesbians there and American evangelicals' complicity with that?

4. Have you received any funding from PEPFAR?

I got no answers.

The Uganda mission where Otey takes his travelers is called Prepare the Way, which also has roots in Lee's Summit, MO. I asked that mission's leaders, Pastor Bill and Linda Campbell the following:

1. Did you support the death penalty for gays and lesbians bill or did you speak out against it?

2. Have you accepted PEPFAR funds?

3. How does your ministry approach Ugandan gays, lesbians, and their right to pursue happiness? Or do you not support their right to happiness?

I got no response from the Campbells.

Minnesota Atheists President August Berkshire states, "The Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam rely on the belief of an unseen, unprovable god. Among people who are insecure in their faith, an Emperor's New Clothes mentality can set in, where they feel the need to increase the size of the crowd agreeing with them that their invisible being actually exists. Unfortunately, certain interpretations of these religions can lead to discrimination and violence towards people of differing religions and atheists, women, children, and the GLBT community. It does only marginal good to encourage milder versions of these religions because vi-

olence is inherent in the Bible and the Koran; and because it is the elevation of faith above reason, and god-belief over humanism, that is at the heart of the problem."

Berkshire concludes, "We see the dangers of this primitive mythology in America in the bullying of GLBT people and in our denial of equal civil marriage rights to gays and lesbians. This agenda has been carried by American Christian fundamentalists to Africa, where it has been joined with Islam, and is expressed even more harshly, in the forms of beatings, and the threat of passage of laws in Uganda that would imprison and execute gays and lesbians. Religions represent another form of tribalism, which serves to divide people. Without religion and its mythology, humans would have one less thing to fight about and persecute people with."

Theologian David Weiss (author *To the Tune of a Welcoming God*) reflects, "The faith that Jesus preached—and practiced—declared the universal dignity of human beings, not as some humanistic philosophy but as his conviction about the abundant goodness of the God in whose image we live. Jesus imagined a world—he referred to it as 'the reign of God'—where mutuality and unconditional kinship mattered more than wealth or status. His parables, teaching, healings, and table fellowship went so far as to actively subvert the status quo of power, privilege, and their accompanying prejudice. It was the defining feature of his ministry and he was eventually killed because of it."

Weiss continues, "But by the time that European nations were sending out missionaries the faith of Jesus had become the faith about Jesus. It was about getting to the next life rather than living with compassion in this life. And while getting to that next life was linked to making a profession of faith in Jesus, beneath that thin doctrinal veneer was a whole system of obedience that now aimed to undergird European notions of patriarchy, power, privilege, and morality."

Weiss adds, "The faith the missionaries carried with them, with very rare exceptions, was entirely entangled in the European economic, political, and cultural project of domination. It imposed a dualistic world view, which required—almost as the very price of cultural ethnic survival—that colonized peoples learn to mimic the anti-body morality of their oppressors. Ultimately they mimicked it so well and so long that they internalized it, with a fury. And today that fury is unleashed against the LGBT community in Uganda." ■





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# The Buffer

HOLLYWOOD PRODUCES many big-budget movies about superheroes. These generally focus on men who have been bitten by radioactive spiders; or deeply misunderstood men with troubled pasts and a taste for vengeance; or male robots who transform into other robots. Well, readers, it's time for the film industry and it's drooling, adolescent minions to turn its attention to a real superhero—Me! That's right! I'm the Buffer!

My superhero skill is buffing. I know. I know. This sounds vaguely like the skill set of a low-level staffer on a porn movie. But it's much more exciting.

I'm called into employ my superhero skills by people who are preparing to have a dinner party populated by guests who don't like each other; or I'm called to brunch with friends being forced to have an obligatory meal with their parents; or when couples have nothing but uncomfortable silence left between them, I'm summoned to draw attention from their failing relationship for the weekend.

Here's what I do in a nutshell....I march into awkward situations and distract everyone from the bad time they're having. I change the subject; I laugh loudly at mildly

amusing anecdotes; I take an interest in people who are not very interesting and make them feel like they are the most fascinating people in the room.

The secret behind my special buffer powers is that I genuinely believe that everyone has an interesting story to tell. I'm not faking it. I really want to know why your dad decided to go into the insurance industry.

As a result, I get a lot of invitations. I'm almost never asked out for a one-on-one social event, i.e. a work friend won't ask me to go grab lunch unless their mom is visiting the office. In that event, they'll collapse in a chair in my office, head hung in preemptive defeat and they'll beg—beg!!!—me to join them for lunch with their judgmental beast of a mother. And I'll do so gladly because I love both lunch and mothers. The more beastly, the better.

While my superpowers leave most in a state of grateful awe, there is one mortal who is less than impressed. That mortal is my girlfriend.

The sad truth is that my girlfriend does not like people. Here is a direct quote after dragging her along on one too many buffer assignments this past weekend: "I don't like

people." She'd be perfectly content if I reserved my buffering powers for our annual visits with her family. She feels that when too many people rely on my powers, they get diluted and, therefore, I do not satisfactorily protect her.

"I need you to be a shiny object to distract them from me," she complains. "But you're too dull from overuse."

I'm sure Lois Lane had the same complaints about Superman. He probably felt that family vacations were his time to recharge, not battle his own evil familial forces.

I made a promise after last weekend that I'd pass up buffering assignments for the next few weeks. But then I got a call on my special buffer line: it's a good friend's mother's 80th birthday. Several members of the family are not speaking to each other. She is counting on me to be at the party to help create an appearance that everyone is getting along.

Of course, I accept the assignment. But then I glance sheepishly at my girlfriend for permission. "Just remember that we're going to see my family in a month. You better keep a big reserve of buffering for that trip. If not, don't expect to be buffed by me anytime soon." □



**Dear Ms. Behavior:**

When I told my longtime lesbian friend Jodi that I'm bi-curious, she invited me to come with her to a bar. It was an eye-opening experience. I like attention, but women were all over me, asking for my number, wanting me to go home with them, and just acting like horny college guys act.

One woman showed me the vibrator she carries in her purse. Another stuck out her tongue, showing me it's pierced and said, "It adds to the pleasure." I guess I expected more from lesbians since most straight women won't do one-nighters, for fear of looking like sluts.

I went to a different bar with Jodi the following week, and the same thing happened. Jodi said, "With all this attention, you could be sexually active forever!"

Are lesbians extra horny? What makes lesbians think that most women want a one-nighter? Maybe it's not as common with older lesbians, but I'm 27, and it's really a sex thing with the younger ones.

**-CURIOUS BUT CAUTIOUS.**

**Dear Curious but cautious:**

It's true that some younger women are more sexually assertive than the older, unpierced crowd. Many shy women have written saying they'd give anything to meet sexually assertive women. Perhaps a universal movement has begun; just as certain spiritual leaders believe that world peace will evolve through simultaneous meditation, the advent of sexually pushy lesbians might be the result of thousands of unified prayers.

Just how curious are you? Curious enough to go home with a woman before you find out exactly what you're being offered? Or will you stand in the curious corner and observe for a few years? Are you truly offended by the attention of lusty dykes or just bragging about your desirability? Perhaps it's hard to say "No," to a sexy night with someone's special metal tongue stud.

Too bad you didn't include the names and locations of the bars you mentioned. Ms. Behavior's mailbox will surely overflow with inquiries for directions.

As for your original question: Yes, lesbians are extra horny.

**Dear Ms. Behavior:**

I live in the middle of the country and I have both straight and gay friends. I can't help but feel that these wonderful people should all know each other! Efforts at commingling the two groups, however, have been like making Italian salad dressing: no matter how much you shake it up, the oil and vinegar always separate.

Sadly, I feel that I have to put most of the blame on my fellow gay boys. At my housewarming party, gay men spoke to women in the crowd only if they'd met them previously. If I made an introduction they'd skip off after barely a minute. One of my bisexual women friends brought her male fiancée to the party. The boys just ate him up until they found out that he was engaged to a woman. As soon as they discovered this, they just walked away. How rude! The man wasn't

there under false pretenses — why should it matter whether or not he's gay?

I'm not trying to assign every fag a hag, but when one is at a party, one has an obligation to be polite to the other guests, yes? Must one be solely motivated by gender? My next big fete is scheduled very soon, and I've invited my usual mix of gay/straight friends. How can I create easier discourse between the two? What's a veteran hostess to do?

**-JULIE, YOUR CRUISE DIRECTOR**

**Dear Julie:**

Ms. Behavior would suggest that you give up being a control queen and instead become a sisterly example of love and light. Although you might fantasize about hosting the perfect party, where gays and straights would embrace and engage in witty banter instead of separating into two middle school – style cliques, you can't successfully assert your will over your guests' natural tastes and desires. Ms. Behavior agrees that it would be delightful if certain people would stop staring at the buttons on other peoples' jeans long enough to politely greet other human beings, but it's probably an unrealistic expectation.

A control queen like you needs to remember to try to change only the things that can be changed: You can tell your guests where to sit, what to wear, or where to park, and, if you're very forceful, you might get them to comply with your sign over the chips and guacamole admonishing guests not to double dip. But you'll never get the boys to talk to the girls if they don't feel like it. □

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### 2011 PERSON OF THE YEAR

(Continued from page 48)

#### JT: What about your constituents' reaction?

JK: I had a couple who said they'd not be supporting me. But if I could go back and do it all over again, I would do the same thing.

The core reason I am against (the amendment) is we shouldn't be discriminating against a group of people. We should be way past that right now. But looking at it from another standpoint, doesn't the government have better things to do right now? I mean this is already in statute. There are people concerned that it will be challenged in court and that's what it is. People are saying let the people have their say. That's what the bill's author said on the House floor. That's his compelling argument. Not once did he give a compelling reason why it should be on the ballot beside 'let the people have their say'. It's just not true. Because, guess what-no matter if they say yes or no- it's still gonna say that marriage is between a man and a woman. That's the way it is right now. It doesn't mean it can't be changed down the road. So I think to market it that way is misleading. I'm a Republican because I think it's the best vehicle for my view. Not because I blindly follow the party platform or I agree with everything they say. And I hope that's the reason Democrats are Democrats.

But I think when we get into that just because it's in the party platform, that's the way we need to think -there's some people like that- then we have some problems. But I just think it's the contradiction of what Republicans preach and stand for. How many times a session did we hear 'we need less government! We need government to stay out of our lives, out of our pockets, out of this, out of that.' But there's this one thing that it's okay if government reaches into.

I get tired of the whole 'protecting marriage' thing. I am actually pretty confident that my marriage is just fine. So if Bob and Bill are a married couple and they move next door, they're not going to affect my marriage. And if Jane and Sue are right next door on the other side, they're not going to affect my marriage. That's the beauty of America. Whatever makes you happy, as long as it's not physically harming other people, have at it.

**JT: The Republican Party historically has had some great Presidents who defended individual freedom and human dignity: Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower. You are of a younger generation that doesn't have as much of a problem with gay people as older generations.**

JK: I think that's part of it. (But) like I said on the floor, if this had come up a few years ago and I was in office -and I wasn't, but just guessing- I don't know how I would have voted. I probably would have voted yes. But I guess it's hard to say because I didn't think about it like I think about it now. So I would never know.

But times are just different and I've never had an issue with it. So it's up to you, what you wanna do. I think that's how other people should look at it. Does it really hurt you? No. Well then, let it be.

**JT: Any advice for GLBT friends, families, allies, etc. about how we can go about convincing people in an effective and dignified way? Not flying off the handle? I've already told some folks to watch their temper. Be rational and cool.**

JK: What you've just said is probably the best advice anybody could give. Just stay calm and be respectful. It's easy to be upset at the people that brought this forward. I was very upset at the people who brought this forward when it was on the floor. And that was tough for me. There's times I get angry about things and this doesn't personally affect me. So I couldn't imagine being in a situation where this would affect my family. And so it's hard for me to give advice to say, 'listen, here's what I would do if I were in your spot' because I'm not.

But I would just say stay respectful, which is going to be the hardest thing to do because if someone was ripping on my family, I'd wanna tell 'em what I thought. But be calm and respectful. Kill 'em with kindness. That's what works best in Minnesota. Kill 'em with kindness and showing that you know that we're all the same, despite sexual preference. That's something that's private, so that should never be an issue. Besides that, we're all the same. □



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## All I Want for Christmas is My Two Jubbies

(Sung to the tune of "All I Want for Christmas  
is My Two Front Teeth")

All I want for Christmas is my two jubbies  
My two jubbies  
Hey, my two jubbies  
Gee, if only I could have my two jubbies  
Then you could feel me up on Christmas

It's been so long since I could say  
Wanda Wisdom makes 'em all whistle

Gosh, oh gee, how happy I'd be  
to get back my two favorite missiles

All I want for Christmas is my two jubbies  
My two jubbies  
Hey, my two jubbies  
Gee, if only I could have my two jubbies  
Then you could feel me up on Christmas!

## A Fleece Wandita

(Sung to the tune of Feliz Navidad)

A Fleece Wandita  
A Fleece Wandita  
A Fleece Wandita  
Prosperity never looked so odd

A Fleece Wandita  
A Fleece Wandita  
A Fleece Wandita  
Prosperity never looked so odd

Wanda wishes you a Merry Christmas  
Wanda wishes you a Merry Christmas  
Wanda wishes you a Merry Christmas  
From her bottom floor boudoir!

## Wandalibs!

(based on "Twas the Night Before Christmas")

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the noun  
Not a creature was verb ending in 'ing', not even a mouse.  
The plural noun were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that name of famous person soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their plural noun,  
While visions of plural noun danced in their heads.  
And name of female friend in her 'kerchief, and I in my article of clothing,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's noun.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I verb, past tense from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a noun,  
verb, past tense the shutters and threw up the sash.

The noun on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight animals, plural.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be name of famous person.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he verb, past tense, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now name of a pet! now, Dancer! now, name of a band and Vixen!  
On, Comet! On, name of celebrity on, on Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the noun! to the top of the wall!  
Now verb away! verb away! Dash away all!"





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# Teen Homelessness Help

## STATISTICS

- 1 out of 4 youth are kicked out or disowned by their biological families or caregivers when they come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

- Between 20-40% of the homeless youth population self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender vs. 3-5% of the general youth population in Minnesota.

- There are 2,500 unaccompanied homeless youth each night in Minnesota. This number represents a 49% increase in the number of homeless youth in Minnesota since 2006. Homeless youth are the largest growing sub-population of the homeless.

- 64% of homeless youth have had prior placement/involvement with the child welfare system. Nearly half (45%) of homeless youth self-report that they have been physically or sexually abused.

## A CALL TO ACTION

They need your help. If you are interested in being part of the solution, please contact one of the charitable organizations below.

### AVENUES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

#### What:

Provides emergency shelter and supportive services for homeless youth. Avenues also houses the GLBT Host Home Project, an initiative to place homeless LGBT youth with welcoming families in the Twin Cities.

#### Contact:

[www.avenuesforyouth.org](http://www.avenuesforyouth.org)  
(612) 522-1690  
1708 Oak Park Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411

### THE BRIDGE FOR YOUTH

#### What:

A shelter for homeless youth

and runaways in the Twin Cities. Also assists youth with supportive services and transitional living. The Bridge serves over a thousand youth each year (ages 10-20).

#### Contact:

[www.bridgeforyouth.org](http://www.bridgeforyouth.org)  
(612) 377-8800  
1111 West 22nd Street Minneapolis, MN 55405

### HOPE STREET HOMELESS SHELTER

#### What:

Shelter serving homeless youth with short-term emergency shelter and intensive case management services for youth

aged 16-20. Staff assess the ability for reconciliation with family or placement with friends.

#### Contact:

[www.cctwincities.org/hope\\_street\\_shelter.aspx](http://www.cctwincities.org/hope_street_shelter.aspx)  
(612) 204-8211  
1121 46th Street E Minneapolis, MN 55407

### THE LINK

#### What:

Provides education, supportive housing, and social services to at-risk youth in the Twin Cities. Includes targeted programs for truancy, homelessness, and involvement in the juvenile legal system.

#### Contact:


[www.thelinkmn.org](http://www.thelinkmn.org)  
(612) 871-0748

### UNITED WAY ARISE PROJECT

#### What:

United Way's first GLBT-focused program. Supports programs for homeless youth.

#### Contact:

[www.unitedwaytwincities.org/giving\\_communities/arise\\_project/](http://www.unitedwaytwincities.org/giving_communities/arise_project/) 



# Follow the yellow brick road.



**[FiatMinneapolis.com](http://FiatMinneapolis.com)**

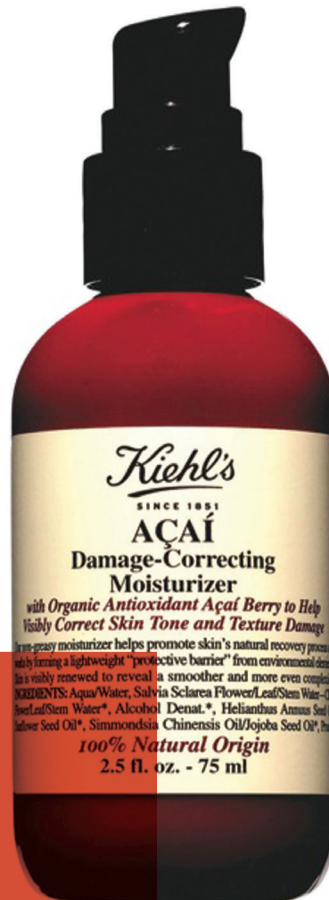
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